Fifth Grade Literacy Skills/Parents

This guide is intended to help you, the parent, understand what your child will be learning and gives suggestions on how to support this learning at home. The first column lists general standards in the Utah State Core Curriculum for Language. The second column, "Your Child is Learning...", lists specific literacy skills in that standard. The third column, "You Can Help at Home ...", lists activities you may do as an important part of their literacy achievement.

	Your Child is Learning How to	You Can Help at Home
	Know why we need to listen	Teach your child to listen by being a good
Language Skills	with understanding and	listener. Give two and three step directions
	follow multiple-step directions	such as, "Call your grandmother, ask her to
		dinner, and tell her we will pick her up".
		Praise when they do what you asked.
	Speak in complete sentences	Model this in talking with your child, and ask
	with expression and have good	questions that cannot be answered in a yes or
	conversations at home.	no, like "What are you learning about other
		states?", or "Tell me about the soccer game
		today", and be sure to listen to what they say.
	View a variety of media, know	Point out the difference between news,
	the difference between inform-	opinions, and accuracy of reports. Talk about
	ation and entertainment, and	current events, sports, characters in popular
	identify purpose for watching.	programs, and enjoy humor in cartoons.
	Participate in class discussions,	Encourage your child to share a hobby or
	give oral reports in class on	special collection, talk about some special
	projects they did for science,	event with his/her class Help him/her speak
	social studies, or other subjects,	clearly by rehearsing at home. Retelling a
	and take part in programs at	story or giving main ideas in an assigned
	school.	report are good activities. Using notes helps,
		and adding pictures often make a
		presentation more interesting.
	Your Child is Learning How to	You Can Help at Home
Spelling	Maintain spelling skills, including	Spell grade-level words that require phonics
	commonly used words, learned	and/or combining word parts, and common
	in previous grades.	letter combinations to spell new words.
	Use root words with prefixes or	Show how identify changes meaning when
	suffixes to read and spell longer	spelled <i>unidentified; reserve</i> drops final <i>e</i> in
	words, and to read and spell	reservation. Add plural and compound words
	plural words, compound words,	such as inches, stories, firewood, himself.
	and common contractions	Have your child make a list of contractions
		met in reading, such as wouldn't, they'll,
		we've, and practice spelling them.

	Know that some words cannot be sounded out and have to be learned by memorizing how to pronounce and spell them. This requires visual memory skills.	Remind your child that most words can be sounded out <i>but</i> we have to just remember how to pronounce and spell many common words, such as <i>social</i> , <i>although</i> , and <i>especially</i> . Writing these words will help your child remember how to pronounce and spell them.
	Your Child is Learning How to	You Can Help at Home
Vocabulary	Use new vocabulary words learned by listening, talking, and reading newspapers and stories.	Read news events, internet text, and parts of good stories together so your child hears words like avalanche, territory, genuine, and equation, and learns what they mean. Then he/she will already know the meaning of many words when he/she reads them later.
	Read and know the meaning of most grade-level words met in stories and information books. Relate new words and concepts to prior knowledge to increase vocabulary.	Ask for a list of words that make up half of the words any reader will see in print, and make sure your child reads them fluently. Then add grade level words like numeral or produce. Many signs use important words to talk about like No Trespassing or Smoking Prohibited. Ask the teacher for a short list of words that may be taught in social studies, science, and other subjects so you can help your child say the words and remember what they mean.
	Add to understanding of words by using the base or root word and adding plurals, prefixes, suffixes, and other word parts.	Begin by adding —tion, - ist, or - less to form words like election, scientist, and defenseless. Discuss how this changes the meaning, and find other words in his/her assigned reading.
	Use context to determine the meaning of new words in print.	Use what you already know when words have several meanings or can be different parts of speech like a noun, a verb, or an adjective—such as <i>general</i> or <i>address</i> . Reading the sentence helps us know which meaning. These are learned with a lot of easy reading and talking about how our language works. (A list of multiple-meaning words is available.)
	Use other resources to learn word meanings, such as charts, dictionaries and/or glossaries. Your Child is Learning How to	Show him/her how to use the dictionary by looking up words together and letting them see what can be learned from these sources. You Can Help at Home
Comprehension	Understand the purpose of reading different print and what the author wants you to learn.	Share the reading you do at work, to learn the news and weather, fill out a form, see what is on TV, or even follow a recipe. Talk about reasons we read information, directions, and stories, and especially what we learn from advertisements.

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Use what he/she already knows to make connections to new information and understand better.	Help your child to see he/she knows a lot about a lot of things. Begin by saying, "What do you already know about? He/she knows more than you might think. This helps him/her put new information with what they know and may make them interested in learning more. Talk about it!
Ask questions about what he/she is reading or is being read to him/her.	This is an important listening skill and thinking task, as it helps your child remember ideas and gain more information to understand better. Get him/her interested by asking simple questions as your child reads to you: "How do you think the boys will escape" or "Why do we have time zones?" Show him/her how to use some of the beginning question words like how, what, when, who and especially why.
Make predictions using picture clues, title, beginning information, and/or prior knowledge. Then see how right he/she was.	This helps your child use what he/she knows to think about what might happen next. When you read together, stop and talk about what has happened in the story so far and predict the next event. This skill shows he/she has been listening and also helps him/her use what he/she knows or imagines might occur next. It is not as important to be correct, as to think about what might happen. Be sure to let him/her know this is a higher-level thinking skill!
Make inferences and draw conclusions about what he/she reads.	This happens when your child can tell in his/her own words what the story or information was about. Begin with a short story, or information text, and talk about what you learned, liked, or wondered about. Then continue to share the reading experience, and discuss your child's ideas about what he/she thinks.
Identify topic, main ideas, and details and summarize what he/she reads.	This skill is really important at every grade level so it needs to be practiced often. Begin by reading with your child a book or article about weather, families, friends, or sports. Get him/her to tell you the main idea, and then talk about some of the details that help explain it. Then have him/her read and tell about the main idea and other information. If he/she has trouble doing this, remind them to go back and read it again, think of what he/she knows, and look for clues that help.
Recognize different structures in text such as problem/solution, compare/contrast, sequence of events, and words that signal each of these.	Point out that most paragraphs in information text are written in one of these forms. Identifying them is important in comprehending, summarizing and understanding the important facts. Words like <i>because</i> , <i>however</i> , <i>also</i> help understanding.

	Recognize characters, setting, series of events, and other information when reading fairy tales, information books, and realistic or historical fiction	Family reading a variety of good books—your library has a list—will help comprehension and shared enjoyment more than any activity. As you read, make prediction, talk about good/bad characters, whether the story was real or make believe, facts learned, and how you liked it.
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Writing	Think of ideas for writing and who will be the audience.	Write notes to your child about things that need to be done, share email and letters from friends, and show what writing you do at work. Then talk about who are the readers of what we write.
	Select the right words and compose a <i>draft</i> copy.	Help your child write a letter or a report in complete sentences, with correct punctuation. Work together to make it read better, talk about how to improve it, and make a few changes.
	Write for different purposes such as stories, letters, and reports.	Point out the difference between these types of writing and tell your child that what he/she can say, he/she can also write. This is important for them to know. Get him/her to tell you a story, or what he/she knows about a subject studied in school, then write what he/she said together so he/she gets the idea of how we use oral language to help us write speech to print works!
	Share writing with others, using illustrations if needed, and publish.	Publishing is learned first by sharing with other family and friends. Praise him/her for this work! Encourage them to share the writing at school, but practice at home first so he/she feels comfortable doing this. Adding pictures often makes it more interesting.
	Your Child is Learning How to	You Can Help at Home
Fluency	Read grade-level text at about 120-150 words per minute, with 95-100% accuracy.	Fluency is important because if we read too slowly, we don't understand very well. Ask the teacher to give you a list of grade-level words that often appear in all kinds of print so you can practice reading these words with your child first, then let him/her practice them alone, with help if needed. This is an ongoing activity for the year. Teachers also have lists of easy phrases on this grade level that will help develop fluency, as reading word-by-word makes comprehension difficult. Each column of phrases contains about 75 words, so two columns should be read in one minute for your child to meet this goal. (These phrases are on the USOE Core website.)
	Read grade level text fluently and with expression.	Reading in phrases helps your child to do this. Model this when you read to him/her, and then have easy, interesting books for more practice